

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS - FOR AMBASSADOR TOON FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, IS, EG, US

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP ON TALKS WITH ISRAELIS ON AMOCO

1. I CALLED DINITZ MORNING SEPTEMBER 18 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECRETARY'S INSTRUCTIONS, TO RECORD OUR VIEW THAT THE ISRAELI POSITION IS INTERNALLY CONTRADICTIONARY AND THAT IT WAS NOT WHAT WE HAD UNDERSTOOD WOULD COME OUT OF THESE TALKS. I ALSO UNDERLINED THAT WE CONTINUE TO REGARD THE ISRAELI POSITION AS UNACCEPTABLE. DINITZ SAID THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS ALSO DID NOT MEET THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

2. I THEN INFORMED DINITZ OF CHANGES THAT THE SECRETARY WISHED MADE IN THE PRESS GUIDANCE. HE SAID HE HAD NO PROBLEM. I REMINDED DINITZ THAT WE WERE NOT ISSUING THIS PRESS LINE AS A FORMAL STATEMENT AND THAT WE WOULD NOT BE DOING ANY BACKGROUND BRIEFING OR GOING INTO ANY DETAILS REGARDVNG THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE. DINITZ SAID THEY WOULD ALSO STICK TO THE LETTER AND SPIRIT

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OF THE PRESS GUIDANCE AND THAT THEY WISHED TO AVOID A WAR

OF WORDS. NEVERTHELESS, DINITZ ADDED, IF ANY ELABORATING DETAILS APPEAR IN THE PRESS THE ISRAELIS WOULD HAVE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. I REPLIED THAT IF THE DETAILS ARE

LEAKED FROM THE ISRAELI SIDE, THEN WE WOULD HAVE TO PUT OUT OUR LEGAL POSITION AND THE PROBLEMS THAT WE HAD WITH THEIR POSITIONS. WE DID NOT WANT TO DO THAT. DINITZ ASSURED ME THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT BRIEF IN ANY WAY, ON-THE-RECORD OR ON BACKGROUND, AND THAT THIS WOULD BE HIS EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS. I TOLD DINITZ THAT WE WOULD BE INFORMING THE COMPANY ABOUT OUR TALKS IN GENERAL TERMS ONLY AND THAT WE WOULD URGE IT NOT TO AGITATE THIS MATTER AND THAT BOTH SIDES WISHED TO AVOID AIRING THE DETAILS PUBLICLY. ANY AIRING OF THE DETAILS, WE WOULD TELL THE COMPANY, WOULD ONLY MAKE THE SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS WITH ALLON MORE DIFFICULT.

3. WE ARE ALSO ASKING THE EGYPTIANS TO REFRAIN FROM ANY PRESS AGITATION OF THIS MATTER. ROBINSON

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